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DECREASING ALIENATION BY HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING

by



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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Decreasing Alienation by Human Relations Training" submitted by James Arthur Field in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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## ABSTRACT

This research was designed to determine whether a Human Relations Training (HRT) group experience would bring about decreased feelings of alienation in the participants and whether that decrement would be maintained over time. Various indices of an "alienation syndrome" were also examined in relationship to autobiographical accounts of the group experience.

The subjects of this study were 22 graduate students which constituted two coed groups. The groups met separately for two-hour sessions each week-day for three weeks and on four occasions met together for interpersonal communications theory and practice based on John Wallen's communication model.

Keniston's Alienation Scale (1968), a series of 11 intercorrelated attitude subscales, was used as an index of alienation. This instrument was administered immediately before and after the HRT experience and again six months later. Daily log-books and diaries were kept by each of the participants.

In testing hypotheses, an analysis of variance for repeated measures showed that there was a significant decrease in feelings of alienation as a result of the HRT group experience and that this decrement was maintained



over a six-month period. The Wilcoxon test was used to show the effects of HRT on the indices of alienation as indicated in Keniston's Alienation Scale. Seven indices showed a significant decrease which was maintained over time: Distrust, Interpersonal Alienation, Social Alienation, Cultural Alienation, Self-Contempt, Vacillation, and Unstructured Universe. The index which showed a significant decrease initially but which was not maintained was Avowed Hostility. Subsection initially showed no significant decrease but did so over time. The Outsider index showed no significant decrease throughout the testing period.

The investigation of the log-books and dairies indicated that the participants' most prevalent concern was with interpersonal relationships within the groups. This was substantiated by the fact that the Interpersonal Alienation index showed the greatest overall decrease.

Results of this study showed implications for more extensive use of HRT experiences especially in various aspects of our educational system. It was suggested that HRT could be a viable technique in problems of alienation in school dropouts, excessive drug users, and protesting youth. Further research into more precise findings in both HRT and alienation was recommended.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Modern man, alienated from nature, from his gods, and from society, in an increasingly mechanized, atomized and depersonalized world, too often is unable to achieve an identity and a relatedness to others (Josephson, 1962, p. 1).

To a lesser or greater extent the above statement epitomizes North American society today. Feelings of alienation and the resultant behaviours are becoming increasingly apparent as a prevalent malaise in our society (Fromm, 1955; Seeman, 1959; Schein and Bennis, 1965; Keniston, 1965 and 1968). This is especially true in the field of education. Phenomena such as school drop-outs, excessive drug use, and protesting youth are related to feelings of alienation (Keniston, 1965 and 1968; Taylor, 1968).

An educational strategy to humanize modern man has been developed and is growing in popularity and acceptance. This "potent new cultural development" (Rogers, 1967, p. 261) has been expanding, and in its various forms and diverse settings, is an attempt to alleviate some of the problems of today's society. Rogers (1967) stated:

Here is an important force in the opposite direction, (the direction toward dehumanizing the





individual and his relationships) working toward making relationships more meaningful and more personal, in the family, in education, in government, in administrative agencies, in industry (p. 275).

This new development is Human Relations Training (HRT) group experience. Schein and Bennis (1965) view training in human relations as one way to deal with problems of alienation and depersonalization in individuals and organizations. They state:

Not that the laboratory training is itself capable of solving these problems; but it is one tangible and vital method which can be applied to examining and diagnosing them. At the most, it can provide a basis for improved mechanisms of choice and processes for solving the problems. At the least, it may help in alerting organizations and developing sensitivity in the individual to the foreseeable problems (p. 7).

Many studies have been conducted in an attempt to determine the various effects HRT group experiences have on human behaviour (Stock, 1964; Campbell and Dunnnette, 1968; Gazda, 1968). Likewise HRT group experiences have been used as a vehicle for human development in numerous settings and for various managerial, community, and professional groups (Rogers, 1967; Bugental, 1969).

The present investigation was designed to determine whether a HRT group experience will bring about a decrement in feelings of alienation in the participants and whether



that decrement will be maintained over time. The effect of HRT on various indices of alienation will also be examined.

#### A. DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF TERMS

The common usage and interest in both alienation and human relations training necessitates more precise definitions and descriptions of these terms for their use in this study.

##### 1. Alienation

The term "alienation" encompasses a broad spectrum of ideas and definitions. Writers such as Marx (Aptheker, 1965); Durkheim (1947); Fromm (1955); Seeman (1959); Buber (1961); Horton (1964); Branden (1965); and Keniston (1965 and 1968) have given various descriptions and meanings to the term. For the purpose of this thesis, alienation will refer to the same meaning that Keniston (1968) gave it. He used it in referring to those feelings of people "who took a critical or repudiative attitude toward their surrounding culture (p. 326)". He viewed alienation as a psychological and sociological problem: "Like most outlooks, alienation is a product of the inner world and the outer world as they continually interact in the



developing individual's experience (p. 340)". Keniston gave the following indices of alienation with an example of each from his Alienation Scale (Appendix A).

- (1) Distrust ("Expect the worst of others and you will avoid disappointment");
- (2) Pessimism ("There is little chance of ever finding real happiness");
- (3) Avowed Hostility ("At times, some people make you feel like killing them");
- (4) Interpersonal Alienation ("Emotional commitments to others are usually the prelude to disappointment");
- (5) Social Alienation ("Teamwork is the last refuge to mediocrity");
- (6) Cultural Alienation ("The idea of trying to adjust to society as it is now constituted fills me with horror");
- (7) Self-Contempt ("Any man who really knows himself has good cause to be horrified");
- (8) Vacillation ("I make few commitments without some reservations about the wisdom of undertaking them");
- (9) Subsection ("First impressions cannot be relied upon, what lies beneath the surface is often utterly different");
- (10) Outsider ("I feel strongly how different I am from most people");
- (11) Unstructured Universe ("The notion that man and nature are governed by regular laws is an illusion"). (p. 327 - 328).

The above constitute an operational definition of an "alienation syndrome" (Keniston, 1968, p. 328).





## 2. Human Relations Training

The process of Human Relations Training group experience is being used under many different names and has various delegate populations, designs, and goals (Schein and Bennis, 1965). Since no clear delineation exists between the various approaches, it is difficult to arrive at a precise definition.

Human Relations Training (HRT) has been variously labelled Human Relations Counselling (Brammer and Shostrom, 1960), Sensitivity Training, T-group ("T" standing for "training" in a laboratory experience) (Bradford et al., 1964), Encounter-group training (Schutz, 1967), Basic encounter group, Intensive group experience (Rogers, 1967), Experiential groups (Gendlin, 1968), and Self-Actualization Workshops (Brammer and Shostrom, 1968).

Extremely diverse delegate populations have taken part in HRT group experiences. These include corporation presidents, delinquent and predelinquent adolescents, college students, faculty members, counselors, psychotherapists, school dropouts, couples, drug addicts, prisoners, nurses, and school personnel (Rogers, 1967).

Designs of HRT group experiences vary from a





laboratory workshop with 100 or more delegates to the typical group size of eight to 20 members (Bradford et al., 1964). The duration of the experience can be from eight hours to four weeks, meeting six to eight hours each day (Rogers, 1967).

As previously mentioned HRT group experiences have various goals. Rogers (1967) gives an excellent summary of these goals in the following description:

In an intensive group, with much freedom and little structure, the individual will gradually feel safe enough to drop some of his defenses and facades; he will relate more directly on a feeling basis (come into a basic encounter) with other members of the group; he will come to understand himself and his relationship to others more accurately; he will change in his personal attitudes and behaviour; and he will subsequently relate more effectively to others in his everyday life situation (p. 262).

The above-mentioned goals of feelings of personal freedom, direct member-to-member communications, better self-understanding and ultimately more effective interpersonal relationships in the participants' daily environments are closely related to definitions of HRT. Bugental and Tannenbaum (1969) give a succinct definition and description of HRT group experiences as:

A social vehicle for helping individuals increase their effectiveness in self-fulfillment and in relating to others. Participants in the experience generally find that the more authentic communication,



the chance to exchange candid 'feed-back' with others, and the working out of meaningful relationships are valuable experiences (p. 334).

The two groups that participated in this study each consisted of 11 coed graduate students who were enrolled in Educational Psychology 517, Human Relations Training. The groups met separately for two-hour sessions each weekday for three weeks. On four occasions the groups met for one-hour sessions together for communication theory instruction and exercises pertaining to the theory.

From discussions with the two group trainers and from the researcher's personal experience in another Educational Psychology 517 group it can be said that these groups generally encompassed the aforementioned goals. Interpersonal communication was a specific focus for the groups. Communication problems were examined in theory and practice. This examination was based on unpublished materials of John Wallen (see appendix B), a social psychologist from Portland.

Wallen states that communication problems are the result of an "interpersonal gap". This gap refers to the degree of incongruence between one person's intentions and the effect produced in others in communication.



Four communication skills were practised in an effort to reduce the "interpersonal gap":

(1) Paraphrase - repeating in your own words what you interpret another person to have said rather than assuming you are understanding exactly what he is saying.

(2) Behaviour description - describing what you see or hear another person doing or saying as objectively as possible rather than evaluating it or making inferences from it.

(3) Description of feelings - describing your feelings with words as accurately as possible rather than letting your feelings be known in some other way.

(4) Perception check - describing what you think the other person is feeling and checking on it with him, rather than acting on how you assume he is feeling.

To summarize, HRT for this study means a group experience where participants attempt to achieve more meaningful interpersonal relationships and skills by learning to communicate as authentically as possible.

## B. INTRODUCTION TO TEXT

The rationale and purpose of the present study along





with descriptions and definitions of terms was discussed in Chapter I. A review of the related theory and research in various constructs of alienation and effects of HRT is presented in Chapter II. Chapter III is devoted to an explanation of the experimental designs and statistical procedures. The results and findings are reported in Chapter IV. A summary of the study, a discussion of the findings and implications for practice and research are included in Chapter V.





## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED THEORY AND RESEARCH

The concept of alienation and the principles of HRT are very much in vogue in contemporary North American society. Although knowledgeable writers such as Shein and Bennis (1965) view HRT group experiences as a social process to alleviate some of the problems of alienation, a review of the relevant theoretical and research literature indicated that no research has been conducted specifically to show that HRT brings about decreased feelings of alienation.

Alienation as it is discussed by various writers is a nebulous concept; this vagueness results in empirical and operational difficulties. Most alienation literature consists of various theories concerning the etiology and contemporary manifestations of alienation. To a large extent, research in alienation has attempted to operationalize various alienation constructs and develop instruments to measure these constructs.

HRT literature is much more specific and research has been conducted to explore various aspects of HRT.

The focus of this chapter, then, will be on some



of the prominent literature concerning the general concept of alienation and the research dealing with operationalizing alienation constructs as well as the literature on some of the effects of HRT group experiences.

#### A. ALIENATION

The literature on alienation is extensive and the concept means various things to various people. The term has been used in many disciplines: psychology, psychiatry, sociology, economic history, philosophy and literature (King, 1968). Several writers (Nettler, 1957; Seeman, 1959; Dean, 1961, Feuer, 1963; Horton, 1964; King, 1968; Loken, 1968; Schacht, 1968) include a short history of the concept of alienation along with the particular subject of their work. Eric and Mary Josephson (1962) and Gerald Sykes (1964) have compiled volumes of numerous biographical and theoretical writings on various aspects of alienation. Writers such as Nisbet (1953), Nettler (1957), Seeman (1959), Middleton (1963), Feuer (1963), Horton (1964), Simmons (1964), King (1968), and Schacht (1968) agree that the present meaning of alienation is nebulous. Representative of this view is Keniston (1965):

The ambiguous concept of alienation has in recent years become increasingly fashionable and,



partly as a result, increasingly devoid of any specific meaning. More and more, the term is used to characterize whatever the author considers the dominant maladies of the twentieth century; and since views differ as to what these maladies are, the meanings of alienation fluctuate with each writer, and often according to the moods of the same writer (p. 451-452).

It is beyond the scope of this research to make an attempt to sort out the various meanings attached to "alienation" but it would be of interest to cite some of the more prominent views.

Perls (1951) and Fromm (1955) had a similar view of the alienated person and saw him as being out of contact or out of touch with himself and other people. The non-authentic relationships of an alienated person causes him to lose his genuine selfhood. Fromm saw alienation as having reached plague proportions in modern society. In speaking of the lack of interpersonal relationships in our society Keniston (1960) wrote:

... the vocabulary that prevades society in its present relationships ... are "alienation, estrangement, separation, withdrawal, indifference, disaffection, apathy, noninvolvement, neutralism" - all these words describe the increasing distance between men ... In short, the direction of cultural change is from commitment and enthusiasm to alienation and apathy (p. 161-162).

In a study of intellectuals, Hajda (1961) wrote of





the alienated person's uneasiness and discomfort caused by his exclusion or self-exclusion from social participation. He suggested that feelings of alienation are not inevitable but are dependent upon the kind of relationships and ties the person has established.

Gerson (1964) saw alienation in mass society in the structured and patterned social relationships that people seek. He stated that semi-alienation is an established expectation in our society.

As previously mentioned, various writers have attempted to operationalize various constructs of alienation in attempts to make the entire study of alienation more precise.

An early attempt at empiricism was Srole's (1956) anomie scale which measured a form of alienation. Meier and Bell (1959) described Srole's anomie scale as a measure of personal demoralization, utter hopelessness and discouragement. One of the important outcomes of Srole's study was the amount of further research that it stimulated.

Nettler (1957) attempted to clarify the "estrangement from society" or "outsider" aspect of alienation.





His procedure was to derive a definition from an extensive review of the literature, set up a model of estranged persons, conduct attitude-discerning interviews, construct a scale and administer it. Nettler found severe alienation to be related to creativity, mental-emotional disorder, altruism, suicide, chemical addiction, marriage breakdown, and criminal behaviour.

Seeman (1959) played a major role in helping to bring some order to the chaos surrounding the concept of alienation. In an exhaustive review of the literature Seeman presented an organized view of the uses of the concept of alienation and provided an approach of tying in historical interest to empirical efforts. He identified five alternative meanings of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. This laid a foundation for further research of these five constructs of alienation.

In an effort to more clearly define the "powerless" index of alienation Clark (1959) studied an agricultural co-operative organization as a social system. He conducted 361 personal interviews among the 3,000 members on questions about how each person saw various aspects of the co-operative.



He derived this definition: "Alienation is the degree to which man feels powerless to achieve the role he has determined to be rightfully his in specific situations (p. 849) ."

Dauids (1961) studied 20 Harvard undergraduates in an effort to develop an objective instrument to measure personal and social apperception and ego structure. He found that alienated subjects were "lone wolves" and distrustful of other people.

By conducting a review of the literature and over 70 personal interviews, Dean (1961) developed an alienation scale in a further attempt to operationalize "powerlessness", "normlessness", and "social isolation". Along with expressing a need for considerably more research, Dean found an indication that alienation is not a unitary phenomenon, but a syndrome.

In a study of random samples of 99 Negroes and 207 Caucasians from various educational and occupational levels, Middleton (1963) found an intercorrelation among "powerlessness", "meaninglessness", "normlessness", "social estrangement", and "estrangement from work". The items for the above were derived from a large survey of attitudes on a variety of subjects: civil defense, mental



illness, political leadership, and the employment of married women.

Neal and Rettig (1963 and 1967) carried out a multi-dimensional study of alienation among 600 manual and non-manual workers. The factors of powerlessness, inevitability of war, political and economic normlessness, anomie, personal freedom, communal values, competitive mobility-orientation and intrinsic values were analyzed. From this, the researchers concluded that alienation is a general concept tying together common elements of lower order constructs. Neal and Rettig (1963 and 1967) offered the following criteria as guidelines for alienation research:

- (1) that each alienation construct have a single, identifiable referent;
- (2) that researchers operationalize their concepts and assume responsibility for showing the congruence of their concepts with their empirical referents; and
- (3) that the alienation constructs be related empirically to either their generative social conditions or their social consequences (p. 61-62).

Simmons (1964) administered a questionnaire to 391 college students based on the scales developed by Srole (1956), Seeman (1959), and Dean (1961). He found that religious liberalism, and personal disturbance were





associated with alienation from society. In further analysis of the above research, Simmons (1966) found seven facets of alienation: normlessness, powerlessness, social isolation, despair, misanthropy, low self-esteem, and life-dissatisfaction, to form a multi-dimensional syndrome.

As the result of a longitudinal, in-depth study of severely alienated students, Keniston (1965 and 1968) developed operational measures of alienation. From these indices Keniston developed an alienation scale. The indices of alienation that Keniston found are: distrust, pessimism, avowed hostility, interpersonal alienation, social alienation, cultural alienation, self-contempt, vacillation, subspection, outsider, and unstructured universe. Along with Dean (1961) and Simmons (1964), Keniston spoke of alienation indices as constituting an "alienation syndrome."

Using the alienation scales of Seeman, Dean, and Keniston, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, the Personality Research Form, and the Minnesota Tests of Creative Thinking - Verbal Form A, Loken (1968) studied the relationship between alienation and certain personality variables. From 339 college freshmen a small biased





sample of 12 alienated students were found to be more psychopathic, impulsive, schizophrenic, creative, psychasthenic, cognitively structured, socially introverted, autonomous, and emotionally open as measured by the above-mentioned instruments.

#### B. HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING

HRT research can be approached in three ways according to Stock (1963). The character of the group can be considered, the perception and behaviour of individual members can be assessed, or it is possible to examine the impact of the group experience on the participants. The latter approach is the one taken for this investigation and it is this type of research that will be considered in the following samples of related literature.

Dorothy Stock in Bradford et al. (1964) has given an excellent survey of the research in HRT from its beginning in 1947. In research specifically designed to determine the impact HRT has on group participants, she discusses 17 studies which she considers to be most comprehensive. Some of the individual learning and change found to have resulted from HRT were gains in self-



understanding and self-confidence, greater interpersonal contact and involvement, being more receptive of feedback from others, having more insight into group processes, being more sensitive to the feelings and needs of others, having greater constructiveness in their views of problems, and having more congruence between self-perception and the perceptions of others.

Although many of the outcomes mentioned above are behavioural changes that were observed during and immediately following the group experience, some specific changes were observed back in the participants' work environment. Participants communicated more clearly and effectively with co-workers back on the job; more sharing and encouraging responsibility and participation among peers and subordinates occurred, and participants displayed better analytic understanding of human behaviour.

Using a modified form of Kelly's Role Repertory Test, Harrison (1966) tested 115 participants of two-week and three-week training labs. He found more significant positive changes in participants of three-week rather than two-week labs. In addition, the changes were significant after three months. The changes included greater ability



at abstractness and understanding the complexity of interpersonal perception. Harrison found a significant positive correlation between improvement in interpersonal perception and ratings of active involvement in the training.

The effects of HRT on interpersonal behaviour was studied by Schutz and Allen (1966). The Firo-B questionnaire and a number of open-ended questions were administered to 71 participants before and after a HRT experience and again six months later. Schutz and Allen found that overly dominant participants became less dominant, overly affectionate people became more discriminating and there was change in a positive direction in the participants' self-concepts, behaviour, and feelings toward other people.

Rubin (1967), using a 15-item scale of "human-heartedness" found that participants in HRT showed more acceptance of self and others. He found that an increase in self-acceptance led to greater acceptance of others with decreases in prejudice and suggested that HRT may be a powerful technique to reduce ethnic prejudices.

Limited results were found by Asquith and Hedlund (1967) in a study of 20 management trainees participating in a HRT group experience. The Leadership Opinion





Questionnaire and the Supervisory Index were administered before and after the one-week lab. No significant change in attitudes were measured by the above instruments.

Campbell and Dunnette (1968) conducted an in-depth review of HRT research studies related to the behaviour of individuals in organizations. Of the 44 studies cited, 37 focused on evaluating the outcomes of HRT group experiences. Although Campbell and Dunnette discuss some of the difficulties experienced in HRT research (lack of controls, susceptibility of contamination, lack of clear specification of the nature of changes and small N's), they concluded that "the evidence, though limited, is reasonably convincing that T-group training does induce behavioural changes in the 'back home' setting (p. 98)". Perhaps the strongest point they made was the need for more quantity and quality in HRT research.

Using a new methodology, an information processing model, Dunnette (1969) studied interpersonal perception judgements in HRT groups. The Strong Vocational Interest Blank, used as a basis for self-descriptions, the Gough Adjective Checklist, the Jackson Personality Research form, specifically made empathy questionnaires, and tapes judged





for interaction were used with ten HRT groups and three control groups. Dunnette found greater empathy and stronger interpersonal relationships as the result of HRT group experience.

Of note are several recent and local studies involving various aspects of HRT. Gokiart (1969) studied changes in personal, social, and total adjustment and self-attitudes in mentally retarded participants in HRT. The effects of HRT on empathic accuracy in counsellor trainees were studied by Paley (1969). The effects of HRT on self-disclosure as a form of risk-taking in relationship to certain personality characteristics were researched by Scott (1969). Westwood (1969) investigated the relationship between HRT and self-exploration. Using the special technique of video-tape feedback in HRT, Martin (1969) studied self-confrontation, and Turgeon (1969) investigated the effectiveness of video-tape feedback as a therapeutic method. Johnston (1970) studied the effects of HRT on changes in self-concept and level of abstract functioning.

#### C. SUMMARY

In summary, a common theme of interpersonal



relationships can be observed running through both the alienation and HRT literature. Perls (1951) and Fromm (1955) stated that people are out of touch with others: Keniston (1960) referred to the increasing distance between men; and Rogers (1967) stated that society dehumanizes the individual and his relationships. These statements point to the lack of interpersonal relationships in alienated people. Likewise the examples of Stock (1965), reporting on studies of HRT bringing about greater interpersonal contact and involvement, and Schutz and Allen (1966) finding more positive feelings toward other people show that HRT is one method of building satisfying interpersonal relationships.



## CHAPTER III

### EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

#### A. THE SUBJECTS

The subjects of this study were 22 graduate students enrolled in Educational Psychology 517, Human Relations Training. The 12 female and ten male members whose ages ranged from 22 to 50 were evenly distributed into two coed groups of 11 members each. Many of the participants were experienced counsellors, teachers and administrators with the majority being counsellors. The group met separately for two-hour sessions each week-day for three weeks and on four occasions met together for theory and practice sessions in interpersonal communication. The two group trainers, both university instructors, were not aware of the hypotheses being tested.

#### B. THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

##### 1. Keniston's Alienation Scale

Keniston's Alienation Scale (1968) was used as an index of alienation (Appendix A). This instrument is composed of a series of highly intercorrelated attitude subscales measuring an "alienation syndrome" (Keniston,





1968): (1) Distrust, (2) Pessimism, (3) Avowed Hostility, (4) Interpersonal Alienation, (5) Social Alienation, (6) Cultural Alienation, (7) Self-Contempt, (8) Vacillation, (9) Subsection, (10) Outsider, (11) Unstructured Universe. As to the coherence of this syndrome, the mean subscale-to-subscale correlation is  $+0.47$ , and the mean correlation of Distrust with all other alienation subscales is  $+0.58$  (Keniston, 1968).

The content of these scales was elicited from severely alienated subjects whom Keniston studied in depth. Construct validity is derived from the fact that operational measures were developed in the following manner:

... operational measures of alienation were developed and correlates of these measures were studied systematically in personality tests, in background factors, in fantasy, and in interpersonal behaviour. This aspect of the research, which extended over several years and involved approximately two thousand subjects in all, yielded a consistent picture of the characteristics of the alienated students in the population studied (Keniston, 1968, p. 327).

Loken (1968) found Keniston's Alienation Scale to be a reliable and valid measure of feelings of personal, social, and societal alienation.

## 2. Log-Books and Diaries

During the three-week experience the group members



kept individual daily log-books and diaries, making entries each day after the group sessions. Each person wrote what he observed happened with other group members and also gave an account of his own personal feelings and reactions. Keeping log-books and diaries served to facilitate more of the cognitive aspects of the group procedure because by recording anecdotal events after experiencing them, and without the emotional involvement, it was expected that the participants could gain a more objective and cognitive view of their experiences in the group. A similar procedure was used by Irving A. Weschler and Jerome Reisel (1959) where the authors used session-by-session diaries to identify the unique character and meaning of the group experiences for each person as these developed.

An examination of the log-books and diaries was conducted and discussed in their relationship to some of the changes observed in the indices of alienation.

### C. PROCEDURE

Keniston's Alienation Scale was administered to the participants as a pretest at the first group meeting. The same scale was administered twice more as posttests at



the final session (posttest<sub>1</sub>) and six months later (posttest<sub>2</sub>). By the nature of the scale, higher values indicate lesser feelings of alienation.

#### D. HYPOTHESES

With regard to change in feelings of alienation, it was expected that the group mean on alienation would significantly increase, thus indicating decreased feelings of alienation for participants in the HRT groups and that this change would be maintained over time. Further it was expected that the indices of alienation would show a significant decrease.

Hypothesis 1 - No significant change in mean alienation scores will be observed from pretest to posttest<sub>2</sub>.

(Null hypothesis:  $H_0 : \bar{X}_{\text{pretest}} - \bar{X}_{\text{posttest}_2} = 0$ ).

Hypothesis 2 - No significant change in mean alienation scores will be observed from pretest to posttest<sub>1</sub>.

(Null hypothesis:  $H_0 : \bar{X}_{\text{pretest}} - \bar{X}_{\text{posttest}_1} = 0$ ).

Hypothesis 3 - No significant change in mean alienation scores will be observed from posttest<sub>1</sub> to





posttest<sub>2</sub>.

(Null hypothesis:  $H_0 : \bar{X}_{\text{posttest}_1} - \bar{X}_{\text{posttest}_2} = 0$ ).

Hypothesis 4 - No significant change will be observed in the indices of alienation as measured by Keniston's Alienation Scale.

(Null hypothesis:  $H_0 : \text{Keniston Subscale Values}_{\text{pretest}} = \text{Keniston Subscale Values}_{\text{posttest}_1} = \text{Keniston Subscale Values}_{\text{posttest}_2}$ ).

#### E. DATA PREPARATION

A test for significant change in feelings of alienation from pretest to posttest<sub>1</sub> and from posttest<sub>1</sub> to posttest<sub>2</sub> was required for the experiment. The statistical operation that facilitated the testing of the experimental hypotheses was a one-way analysis of variance using repeated measures.

The researcher would consider the experiment to have produced short-term positive results if the null hypothesis for hypothesis 2 was rejected at the .05 level of significance. If the null hypothesis for hypothesis 1 was rejected and the null hypothesis for hypothesis 3 was accepted at the .05 level of significance the researcher would consider the experiment to have maintained positive





longer-term results. The acceptance of the null hypothesis for hypothesis 3 would give strong support to the HRT experience as indeed bringing about decreased feelings of alienation in the subjects studied.

It also seemed desirable to determine how the indices of the "alienation syndrome" were affected by the HRT experience. The statistical operation that facilitated the examination of the significant change in Keniston's subscale values was a T-test (Ferguson, 1966). The Wilcoxon test (Siegel, 1965) was selected because it is a suitable non-parametric test to be used with correlated data with  $N < 30$ . This test shows the relative magnitude as well as the direction of the differences of matched pairs of data.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND FINDINGS

#### A. TESTING HYPOTHESES

##### Hypothesis 1

The analysis of variance as shown in Table 1 indicates that there was a significant treatment effect over the period of interest. The critical F value with 2 and 42 degrees of freedom is 6.44 (Kirk, 1968) at the .05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis for hypothesis 1 was rejected.

The Scheffé's "a posteriori" contrasts, were used to determine which pairs of means showed significant difference. As shown in Table 2 significant differences between the means in the predicted direction was observed between the pretest and posttest<sub>1</sub>. A significant difference also existed between the means of the pretest and posttest<sub>2</sub> while the difference was not significant between the means of posttest<sub>1</sub> and posttest<sub>2</sub>.

The means of the three tests are graphically shown in Figure 1 to illustrate the changes in feelings of alienation.



TABLE 1

Summary of the Analysis of Variance  
for Repeated Scores of Alienation

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F
Treatment	8156.27	2	4078.13	7.40
People	59977.8	21	2856.08	
Residual	23145.7	42	551.089	

p < .05

TABLE 2

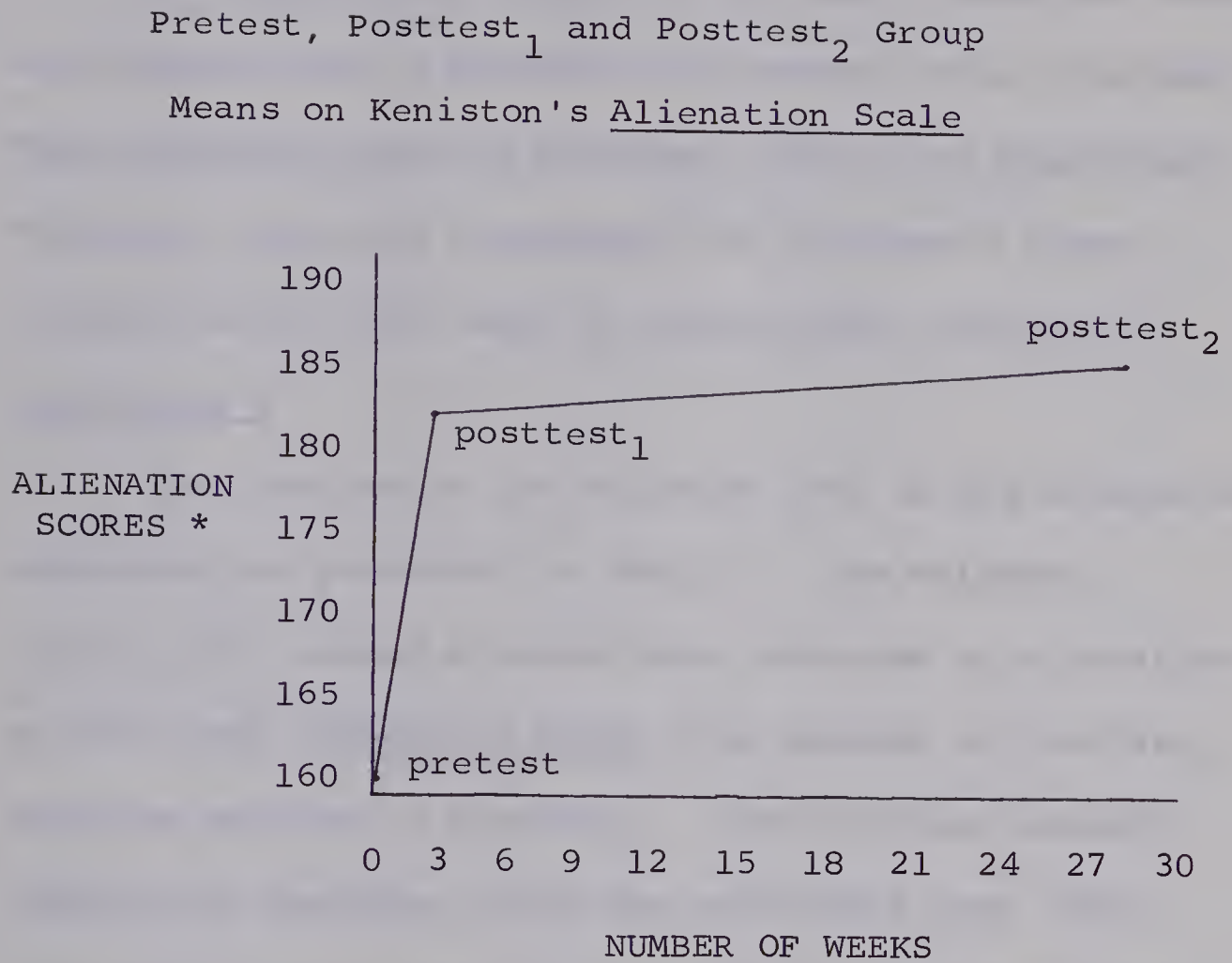
Summary of Scheffè's "A posteriori" Contrasts  
on Test Means of Alienation Scores

Source of Variation	F observed	Significance Level
pretest vs. posttest <sub>1</sub>	9.34	.05
pretest vs. posttest <sub>2</sub>	12.61	.01
posttest <sub>1</sub> vs. posttest <sub>2</sub>	0.24	n.s.





FIGURE 1



\* Higher scores indicate lesser feelings of alienation.

### Hypothesis 2

A significant increase in the mean alienation scores was observed from pre to post-group experience. This indicated a decrease in feelings of alienation. Therefore, the null hypothesis for hypothesis 2 was rejected at the .05 level of significance (Table 2).



### Hypothesis 3

No significant change in the mean alienation scores was observed over a period of six months after treatment. This indicated that the treatment effect was maintained. Therefore, the null hypothesis for hypothesis 3 was accepted at the .05 level of significance (Table 2).

### Hypothesis 4

The results of the Wilcoxon test on the alienation subscales are presented in Table 3. The Wilcoxon statistic<sup>(1)</sup> showed a significant decrease in alienation on the total Alienation Scale from pretest to posttest<sub>1</sub> and from pretest to posttest<sub>2</sub>. Seven indices showed a significant decrease which was maintained over time: Distrust, Interpersonal Alienation, Social Alienation, Cultural Alienation, Self-Contempt, Vacillation, and Unstructured Universe. The index which showed a significant decrease initially but did not maintain it over the six-month period was Avowed Hostility. Subspecion was an index of alienation which initially showed no significant decrease but decreased over time.

---

(1) The numerical value of the Wilcoxon Statistic should not be confused with Keniston's Alienation Scale scores. Lesser Wilcoxon values mean lesser feelings of alienation.



TABLE 3

Observed Values of the Wilcoxon Statistic  
on the Indices of Alienation

KENISTON SUBSCALES	WILCOXON STATISTIC		
	Pretest	Pretest	Posttest <sub>1</sub>
	vs. Posttest <sub>1</sub>	vs. Posttest <sub>2</sub>	vs. Posttest <sub>2</sub>
Distrust	41.5*	40.0*	31.0
Pessimism	71.0	81.5	42.0
Avowed Hostility	56.5*	77.5	61.0
Interpersonal Alienation	21.0*	0.0*	5.0
Social Alienation	51.0*	56.5*	31.5
Cultural Alienation	53.0*	44.0*	77.0
Self-Contempt	49.5*	20.0*	30.0
Vacillation	59.5*	36.0*	67.5
Subspection	110.0	47.5*	26.5
Outsider	76.5	81.0	93.0
Unstructured Universe	40.0*	45.0*	55.5
Total	63.0*	37.0*	90.5

N = 22

Critical value of Wilcoxon statistics at  $\alpha .05 = 66.0$   
(Siegel, 1965).

\* - Significant at  $\alpha .05$ .





The outsider index showed no significant decrease throughout the experiment.

Because the Wilcoxon statistic was not significant between Posttest<sub>1</sub> and Posttest<sub>2</sub> totals, the subscale values are shown but not considered.

On the basis of the above-mentioned significant changes in the indices of alienation the null hypothesis for hypothesis 4 is rejected at the .05 level of significance.

#### B. INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

Individual values on Keniston's Alienation Scale are shown in Table 4. These values reveal that 17 of the 22 participants had scores which indicated they were less alienated immediately after the HRT group experience. After the six month follow-up, 18 of the 22 people were shown to have scores indicating they were less alienated. Two people, although more alienated immediately after treatment, showed a longer-term decrease in feelings of alienation over their initial score. One person showed a longer-term increase in alienation score even though the short-term posttest<sub>1</sub> results indicated a decrease in alienation. It is indeterminable whether or not these changes are statistically significant.





TABLE 4

Scores\*, Means and Standard Deviations for Three Administrations of Keniston's Alienation Scale

PERSON	PRETEST	POSTTEST <sub>1</sub>	POSTTEST <sub>2</sub>
1	176	234	204
2	150	172	182
3	179	195	190
4	162	166	183
5	139	190	256
6	166	220	198
7	148	165	178
8	176	164**	196
9	152	170	169
10	153	168	200
11	203	167**	184**
12	219	241	182**
13	134	130**	138
14	165	216	217
15	39	152	161
16	184	206	185
17	152	142**	142**
18	208	214	228
19	113	165	187
20	211	235	227
21	174	195	174
22	123	95**	98**
Means	160.27	181.91	185.41
S. D.	38.85	36.64	33.26

\* Higher scores indicate lesser feelings of alienation.

\*\* Denotes increased feelings of alienation from pretest to either posttest.



### C. LOG-BOOKS AND DIARIES

In the investigation of the participants' log-books and diaries the researcher recognized the danger of bias in interpreting the findings to fit the previously mentioned results. Only the most dominant themes and topics in the log-books and diaries are reported here.

The examination showed that generally the participants were quite involved in the HRT group experience. They wrote of emotionally laden discussions and indicated that group events occupied their minds even when the group was not in session. Most of the writing centered around the participants' interpersonal relationships within the group. Trusting one another in honest communication was quite evident as being an issue during the experience. The participants put much more emphasis on the impact of the experiences in the group than in the theory sessions.

Most of the group participants, 18 out of 22, expressed regret about ending the experience. Comments such as: "This has been, to me, a memorable experience -- a beginning of knowing myself. There is much to be learned and I am looking forward to further experiences,



to further growth in myself and in my relationships with others." indicated it had been beneficial and that they would like a similar experience again. Most of the derived benefits were expressed in general terms such as greater feelings of self-knowledge, self-growth, sensitivity to others, and improved relationships with others. Gains that were more specific were also expressed such as a greater sense of self-worth and self-confidence and the realization of the importance of more precise communication in interpersonal relationships. Expressions of impatience and frustration were stated on numerous occasions: "Just who in the hell do these people think they are? I spent one hell of a night over this thing . . . !". Even so, there was no indication that the experience had been deleterious to any of the participants in the sample groups.





## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

#### A. SUMMARY

This research was an investigation designed to determine whether a HRT group experience would bring about decreased feelings of alienation in the participants and whether that decrement would be maintained over time. Various indices of an "alienation syndrome" were also examined in relationship to autobiographical accounts of the group experience.

The research design involved the assessment of feelings of alienation of 22 graduate students enrolled in a HRT class. Keniston's Alienation Scale was administered immediately before and after the three week experience and again six months later.

Four null hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1 - No significant change in mean alienation scores will be observed from pretest to posttest<sub>2</sub>.

Hypothesis 2 - No significant change in mean alienation scores will be observed from pretest to posttest<sub>1</sub>.



Hypothesis 3 - No significant change in mean alienation scores will be observed from posttest<sub>1</sub> to posttest<sub>2</sub>.

Hypothesis 4 - No significant change will be observed in the indices of alienation as measured by Keniston's Alienation Scale.

As a result of an analysis of variance for repeated measures and the Wilcoxon test, null hypotheses 1, 2, and 4 were rejected and null hypothesis 3 was accepted at the .05 level of significance.

Log-books and diaries were investigated in an attempt to better understand some of the changes observed in the indices of alienation. Individual alienation scores were also shown.

## B. DISCUSSION

The rationale for this study was based on the ideas of writers such as Fromm (1955), Seeman (1959), Schein and Bennis (1965), and Keniston (1965 and 1968) who believed that alienation, with a resultant lack of satisfactory interpersonal relationships, is a prevalent malaise in modern society. Furthermore, writers such as



Schein and Bennis (1965) felt that HRT is a viable social technique that can be employed to alleviate feelings of alienation, especially in relation to interpersonal relationships.

The positive results of testing hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 would tend to confirm the above rationale. As a result of an HRT group experience there was a decrease in feelings of alienation in the participants and this decrement was maintained.

Testing hypothesis 4 indicated that the alienation indices of Distrust, Interpersonal Alienation, Social Alienation, Cultural Alienation, Self-Contempt, Vacillation, and Unstructured Universe showed a significant decrease which was maintained over time. There are various ways of accounting for these changes and some of the more plausible ones will be discussed. Because the indices form an "alienation syndrome" and interact with each other, it is difficult to delineate them and discuss them separately.

Gibb (1964), in discussing the nature and theory of HRT, believed that there would be decreases in feelings of distrust, interpersonal alienation, social alienation,





and self-contempt at the result of participation in HRT.

He stated:

A person learns to grow through his increasing acceptance of himself and others ... The critical function of the T group is to augment this process of personal learning. The person learns to participate with others in creating a defense-reductive climate, becomes aware of the processes of such creation, and learns how to generalize these learnings to other dyadic and group situations. That is, he learns how to create the interpersonal situations which will help him to accept himself and others -- to grow and to help others to grow (p. 279-280).

Log-book and diary entries as reported in chapter four generally concurred with the above statement.

An increase in self-confidence (Stock, 1964) as a result of HRT might be one way of accounting for the decrease in the vacillation index of alienation. Participants in the present study did report feeling more self-confident. More effective communication and better relationships in the every-day environment could bring about decreased feelings of cultural alienation. Feelings attributed to the Unstructured Universe index of alienation - that the environment has little or no order - could have decreased because of a better analytic understanding of human behaviour (Stock, 1964).





The finding that Interpersonal Alienation showed the greatest overall decrease is not surprising. Most of the discussion in the log-books and diaries centered around interpersonal relationships within the group. The participants described in detail the events and feelings surrounding the interactions between themselves and others and the interactions among the other participants. As the group experience progressed, the participants seemed to become more and more involved with each other.

The participants' writings indicated no evidence for the Subsection index of alienation to be so apparent after the HRT group experience. Little indication of the participants being cynical of themselves, other group members, or of their environment outside the group was evident. Although, as the findings indicate, there was a significant decrease in the Subsection index from before the HRT group experience to six months after.

It would be conjecture to attempt to explain the results pertaining to the Avowed Hostility and Outsider indices of alienation. The researcher could find nothing in this study to account for the findings that Avowed



Hostility showed an initial significant decrease but did not maintain this increase over the six-month period and that the Outsider index showed no significant change throughout the testing period.

### C. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Although the results of this research should be regarded as suggestive rather than definitive, they would imply more extensive use of HRT group experiences. HRT certainly is not a panacea for the ills of today's society, but it is a way to help improve communication and relations among people.

HRT has been used in a variety of ways in connection with our educational system in a sporadic and intermittent manner. It could be employed in a more planned and systematic way. Many of the principles of HRT could be incorporated in the daily classroom setting.

The more extensive use of various applications of HRT in our educational system would imply far more use of HRT in teacher-training programs. This would be in-service training as well as university programs.

There is growing concern over various segments in



our society that are showing very obvious signs of alienation. HRT could be an effective technique in presenting alternatives to school drop-outs and potential drop-outs. The void that many people are attempting to fill by the excessive use of drugs (Life, Feb. 20, 1970) might be helped to be filled by various applications of HRT. Protesting youth in our society are exemplary of the growing distance between youth and the rest of society. (Time Magazine, May 18, 1970). HRT could help in bridging that gap.

#### D. IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

The use of more extensive HRT experiences should be backed up by research. There should be a close examination of all three aspects of HRT research; group characteristics, individual member behaviour and group impact (Stock, 1963). This research should be conducted with the various group populations mentioned previously.

Hypotheses regarding various indices of alienation should be tested as to how they are affected by various HRT designs. Specifically the effects on alienation of various kinds of follow-up and long-term experiences need





to be researched.

More precise research designs need to be employed. This calls for the development and testing of better instruments for determining various aspects of alienation and HRT. The employment of control groups and more longitudinal studies is necessary.

In conclusion, the results of this study suggest that HRT group experiences could be a viable strategy to help to alleviate some of the problems of alienation but more precise research is needed.



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## A P P E N D I X     A

### KENISTON'S ALIENATION SCALE



We are interested in your opinion on a variety of issues. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be truthful. Put your answers on the IBM answer sheet. Make sure the answers on the IBM sheet match the numbers of the test items.

Directions: (Please read carefully)

If you strongly disagree, mark the first blank.....A=B=C=D=E=

If you disagree, mark the second blank.....A=B=C=D=E=

If you are undecided, mark the third blank.....A=B=C=D=E=

If you agree, mark the fourth blank.....A=B=C=D=E=

If you strongly agree, mark the fifth blank.....A=B=C=D=E=

Put your name and ID number on the IBM sheet before you begin.

1. Nice as it may be to have faith in your fellow men, it does not pay off.
2. Very few people will help another person out unless it benefits them in some way.
3. In this saccharine age of empty banalities and hollow affirmations opposition or withdrawal are the most honest solutions for the individual.
4. I am frequently led to abandon a projected course of action when I begin to worry about its consequences.
5. Most people secretly despise those who depend on them.
6. Second thoughts about things we have undertaken are completely natural: almost every endeavor has disadvantages which only become apparent once we are embarked on it.
7. I am not what would ordinarily be called a "decisive" or "resolute" person.
8. I expect neither help nor praise nor sympathy from others.
9. It is generally advisable to avoid intense personal attachments.
10. Too many men lead shallow drab lives: I want to look into the depths, beneath the superficialities and conventionalities of everyday life.
11. Attempts to predict the future are doomed to failure: random, fickle chance governs all.
12. Most ideologies and beliefs serve primarily to hide men's unpleasant motives from themselves.
13. I often wonder after I have promised to do something whether I was wise to have made the commitment.





14. I sometimes lose perspective and really hate myself after I have done something wrong.
15. The world abounds with people who experience their keenest satisfactions in exposing the weaknesses and defects of others.
16. I feel strongly how different I am from most people, even my close friends.
17. There are times when I can hardly control my irrational hatred.
18. First impressions cannot be relied upon; what lies beneath the surface is often utterly different.
19. I cannot accept appearances: I must go beneath them to the secret sources of dignity and shame, strength and weakness.
20. Pursuit of the shallow values of success, popularity, and adjustment has led our society far towards moral bankruptcy.
21. Only by keeping on guard against the possible untrustworthiness of others can we spare ourselves the continual pain of disillusionment.
22. Beneath our personable facades lie depths of human nature which many people would find unimaginable.
23. Only very rarely do things turn out for the best: disappointments, complete or partial failures--these are the inevitable bitter lessons of experience.
24. Human life rests on blind, unknowable chaos.
25. Canadian culture is inclined to be trashy, cheap, and commercial.
26. I don't think I'll ever find a woman who really understands me.
27. There are sad and depressing times when the world strikes the eye as a huge, heartless, impersonal machine, almost devoid of understanding, sympathy and mercy.
28. In this age of conformity to advertising slogans and the shibboleths of big business, integrity demands that we stand against the main trends of our society.
29. No longer can a young man build his character and his hopes on solid ground: civilization is crumbling, the future is dreadfully uncertain, and his very life hangs by a thread.
30. The reasons people give for their actions should not be accepted at face value; they are usually very far removed from the true motives.
31. I am given to self-accusation and self-recrimination about things I have done or might have done.
32. Few people can preserve (much less find) their identity within a group.
33. Suffering is the only source of wisdom.





34. You can never tell what will happen next, and attempts to find out are predestined to fail.
35. There have been times when I have been so mad at someone I almost could have killed him.
36. The notion that man and nature are governed by regular laws is an illusion based on our insatiable desire for certainty.
37. A wise man expects little from others; thus he avoids the frustration of failure and the despair of disillusion.
38. Honesty compels us to admit that our lives are without any inherent regularity, purpose or form.
39. You are likely to be trampled on by others if you place too much reliance on them or their promises.
40. The future looks black as pitch, with little in view to justify a core of hope or faith.
41. I find I frequently feel hatred for someone I love.
42. Ours is an age of cheap publicity, of ballyhoo, eye-wash, pretense, hypocrisy, and downright lies.
43. Emotional commitments to others are usually the prelude to disillusion and disappointment.
44. The world is full of people who are eager to take advantage of you if you give them the slightest opportunity.
45. Much of our conventionality and rationality is an attempt to gloss over the deeper well-springs of human action.
46. Much as a man may seek true understanding from others, he must reconcile himself to living without it.
47. The real substance of human life consists of a procession of disillusionments, with but few goals that are worth the effort spent in reaching them.
48. The older I get, the more I see the difference that divide and separate me from other people.
49. Here today, gone tomorrow--that's my motto!
50. One of the greatest delusions of our time is the belief that we can know the future.
51. I cannot simply take life as it comes: I must penetrate to the heart of it, see people stripped of their externals.
52. Human relations follow inconstant, unstable courses.
53. Wise men know there is more pain and misery in life than pleasure and delight.



54. Anyone who believes he can "see what the future will bring" is either blind or self-deceived.
55. I will either be a colossal success or a colossal failure, nothing in between.
56. I doubt if I will ever find anyone who really understands me.
57. A man must learn to tolerate loneliness and solitude: it is very rare that he can find a companion who is prepared to accept him for what he is.
58. Canadian culture seldom rewards men of genuine creative ability: the "soft sell" and the "fast pitch" are rapidly becoming the keys to "artistic" success.
59. Sometimes when I dislike my current situation, I hesitate to change it because I am uncertain about the consequences of my contemplated move.
60. There is little chance of ever finding real happiness.
61. Most people who say they are happy close their eyes to the sufferings of the world.
62. The idea of trying to adjust to society as now constituted fills me with horror.
63. To get back at someone who has injured you, to hear of the humiliation and defeat of an enemy--this is both delicious and invigorating.
64. I make few commitments without some inner reservation or doubt about the wisdom of undertaking the responsibility or task.
65. Unless a man has been filled with revulsion, he cannot claim to possess self-knowledge.
66. Any man who has really known himself has had good cause to be horrified.
67. In personal relationships, I sometimes have an acute feeling of my own inadequacy and worthlessness.
68. I daydream occasionally of getting revenge on those who have injured me.
69. I have very little in common with most of the people I meet.
70. You can be certain that beyond every obstacle you encounter, your chosen path is blocked by a succession of further obstacles--some of which are insurmountable.
71. My attitudes and feeling about people often change back and forth rather abruptly.
72. Expect the worst of others and you will avoid disappointment.
73. I sometimes think to myself how much I hate someone.





74. In the last analysis, the "Canadian way of life" is pretty shallow and tawdry.
75. Love and hate are inseparable: we often hate most those who are supposedly closest to us.
76. Very few people can be trusted.
77. There's little more ruinous for an original person than to try to carry out his ideas in cooperation with other people.
78. The whole idea of "taking an active part in the life of my community" leaves me cold.
79. Most people wear masks: we can never really know a man unless we probe below the surface.
80. One should build his life around things which will not require the support of other people, for there is no more potent source of dissatisfaction than unfulfilled hopes about others.
81. I sometimes wish someone I knew was dead.
82. Most people are basically unreliable when their own security or pride is at stake.
83. Only cows are contented.
84. "Teamwork" is the last refuge of mediocrity.
85. He who is gullible enough to believe the "truths" that others tell him is headed for disillusionment, mortification, regret.
86. Trying to cooperate with other people brings mainly strains; rivalry, and inefficiency; consequently, I much prefer to work by myself.
87. Senseless conformity is the dominant trend of our times.
88. I am simply not susceptible to the general enthusiasm for success, togetherness, and material accomplishments.
89. I often am aware that I really loathe someone.
90. Appearances are usually deceptive.
91. The longer I live, the more I realize how basically alone and friendless we all are.





92. Feeling is the truest force at man's command.
93. Life without passion is death.
94. The only life worth living is the creative one.
95. One should not narrow his horizons more than is absolutely necessary.
96. Man struggles to extend his consciousness to the infinite limits of time and space.
97. Psychedelic music turns me on.
98. It is important to be a true individual completely independent from others.
99. It is desirable to use chemical means to expand one's experience.
100. Sex is more a matter of passionate sensation than total involvement with the other person.



..... GRADE .....

ST .....

..... (Yrs.)

RT 1

Indicate answer by placing a mark between the guidelines as shown in the example. Use HB pencil.

MALE FEMALE  
.....  
Example  
A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	36	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	71	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	106	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	37	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	72	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	107	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	38	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	73	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	108	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	39	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	74	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	109	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	40	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	75	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	110	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	41	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	76	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	111	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	42	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	77	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	112	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	43	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	78	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	113	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	44	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	79	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	114	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	45	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	80	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	115	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	46	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	81	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	116	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	47	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	82	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	117	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	48	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	83	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	118	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	49	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	84	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	119	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	50	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	85	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	120	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	51	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	86	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	121	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	52	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	87	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	122	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	53	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	88	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	123	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	54	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	89	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	124	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	55	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	90	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	125	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	56	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	91	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	126	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	57	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	92	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	127	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	58	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	93	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	128	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	59	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	94	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	129	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	60	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	95	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	130	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	61	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	96	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	131	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	62	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	97	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	132	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	63	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	98	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	133	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	64	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	99	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	134	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	65	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	100	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	135	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	66	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	101	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	136	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	67	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	102	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	137	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	68	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	103	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	138	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	69	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	104	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	139	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	70	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	105	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	140	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5

RT 2

B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10	9	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10	10	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10	11	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10	12	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10	13	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10	14	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10
B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10	15	A 1 B 2 C 3 D 4 E 5	F 6 G 7 H 8 I 9 J 10

CAUTION - AVOID PLACING ANY MARKS AMONG THE BLACK LINES



KENISTON'S ALIENATION SCALE -

ITEMS WITHIN SUBSCALES

1. Distrust

Expect the worst of others and you will avoid disappointment.

Nice as it may be to have faith in your fellow men, it does not pay off.

He who is gullible enough to believe the "truths" that others tell him is headed for disillusionment, mortification, regret.

You are likely to be trampled on by others if you place too much reliance on them or their promises.

Only by keeping on guard against the possible untrustworthiness of others can we spare ourselves the continual pain of disillusionment.

Very few people can be trusted.

The world is full of people who are eager to take advantage of you if you give them the slightest opportunity.

Very few people will help another person out unless it benefits them in some way.

The world abounds with people who experience their keenest satisfactions in exposing the weaknesses and defects of others.

Most people are basically unreliable when their own security or pride is at stake.

2. Pessimism

The future looks black as pitch, with little in view to justify a core of hope or faith.

Wise men know there is more pain and misery in life than pleasure and delight.





The real substance of human life consists of a procession of disillusionments, with but few goals that are worth the effort spent in reaching them.

You can be certain that beyond every obstacle you encounter, your chosen path is blocked by a succession of further obstacles--some of which are insurmountable.

No longer can a young man build his character and his hopes on solid ground: civilization is crumbling, the future is dreadfully uncertain, and his very life hangs by a thread.

There is little chance of ever finding real happiness.

### 3. Avowed Hostility

I often am aware that I really loathe someone.

I daydream occasionally of getting revenge on those who have injured me.

Love and hate are inseparable: we often hate most those who are supposedly closest to us.

There are times when I can hardly control my irrational hatred.

To get back at someone who has injured you, to hear of the humiliation and defeat of an enemy--this is both delicious and invigorating.

I sometimes wish someone I knew were dead.

I find I frequently feel hatred for someone I love.

I sometimes think to myself how much I hate someone.

Most people secretly despise those who depend on them.

There have been times when I have been so mad at someone I almost could have killed him.





#### 4. Interpersonal Alienation

The longer I live, the more I realize how basically alone and friendless we all are.

I doubt if I will ever find anyone who really understands me.

It is generally advisable to avoid intense personal attachments.

I expect neither help nor praise nor sympathy from others.

Emotional commitments to others are usually the prelude to disillusion and disappointment.

Here today, gone tomorrow--that's my motto!

A man must learn to tolerate loneliness and solitude: it is very rare that he can find a companion who is prepared to accept him for what he is.

One should build his life around things which will not require the support of other people, for there is no more potent source of dissatisfaction than unfulfilled hopes about others.

Much as a man may seek true understanding from others, he must reconcile himself to living without it.

A wise man expects little from others; thus he avoids the frustration of failure and the despair of disillusion.

#### 5. Social Alienation

The whole idea of "taking an active part in the life of my community" leaves me cold.

Trying to cooperate with other people brings mainly strains, rivalry, and inefficiency; consequently, I much prefer to work by myself.

There's little more ruinous for an original person than to try to carry out his ideas in cooperation with other people.



"Teamwork" is the last refuge of mediocrity.

Few people can preserve (much less find) their identity within a group.

## 6. Cultural Alienation

Canadian culture is inclined to be trashy, cheap, and commercial.

In this age of conformity to advertising slogans and the shibboleths of big business, integrity demands that we stand against the main trends of our society.

I am simply not susceptible to the general enthusiasm for success, togetherness, and material accomplishments.

Ours is an age of cheap publicity, of ballyhoo, eye-wash, pretense, hypocrisy, and downright lies.

The idea of trying to adjust to society as now constituted fills me with horror.

Pursuit of the shallow values of success, popularity, and adjustment has led our society far towards moral bankruptcy.

In the last analysis, the "Canadian way of life" is pretty shallow and tawdry.

Senseless conformity is the dominant trend of our times.

## 7. Self-contempt

Any man who has really known himself has had good cause to be horrified.

Unless a man has been filled with revulsion, he cannot claim to possess self-knowledge.

I am given to self-accusation and self-recrimination about things I have done or might have done.

In personal relationships, I sometimes have an acute feeling of my own inadequacy and worthlessness.





I sometimes lose perspective and really hate myself after I have done something wrong.

## 8. Vacillation

I make few commitments without some inner reservation or doubt about the wisdom of undertaking the responsibility or task.

Second thoughts about things we have undertaken are completely natural: almost every endeavor has disadvantages which only become apparent once we are embarked on it.

I often wonder after I have promised to do something whether I was wise to have made the commitment.

I am not what would ordinarily be called a "decisive" or "resolute" person.

I am frequently led to abandon a projected course of action when I begin to worry about its consequences.

Sometimes when I dislike my current situation, I hesitate to change it because I am uncertain about the consequences of my contemplated move.

My attitudes and feeling about people often change back and forth rather abruptly.

## 9. Subspection

Appearances are usually deceptive.

First impressions cannot be relied upon; what lies beneath the surface is often utterly different.

Too many men lead shallow drab lives: I want to look into the depths, beneath the superficialities and conventionalities of everyday life.

I cannot simply take life as it comes: I must penetrate to the heart of it, see people stripped of their externals.

Most people wear masks: we can never really know a man unless we probe below the surface.





Beneath our personable facades lie depths of human nature which many people would find unimaginable.

Most ideologies and beliefs serve primarily to hide men's unpleasant motives from themselves.

I cannot accept appearances: I must go beneath them to the secret sources of dignity and shame, strength and weakness.

Much of our conventionality and rationality is an attempt to gloss over the deeper well-springs of human action.

The reasons people give for their actions should not be accepted at face value; they are usually very far removed from the true motives.

#### 10. Outsider

I will either be a colossal success or a colossal failure, nothing in between.

Only very rarely do things turn out for the best: disappointments, complete or partial failures--these are the inevitable bitter lessons of experience.

There are sad and depressing times when the world strikes the eye as a huge, heartless, impersonal machine, almost devoid of understanding, sympathy and mercy.

I feel strongly how different I am from most people, even my close friends.

The older I get, the more I see the differences that divide and separate me from other people.

I don't think I'll ever find a woman who really understands me.

I have very little in common with most of the people I meet.

Only cows are contented.

Suffering is the only source of wisdom.



Most people who say they are happy close their eyes to the sufferings of the world.

11. Unstructured Universe

Attempts to predict the future are doomed to failure: random, fickle chance governs all.

Honesty compels us to admit that our lives are without any inherent regularity, purpose or form.

You can never tell what will happen next, and attempts to find out are predestined to fail.

The notion that man and nature are governed by regular laws is an illusion based on our insatiable desire for certainty.

Human relations follow inconstant, unstable courses.

Anyone who believes he can "see what the future will bring" is either blind or self-deceived.

Human life rests on blind, unknowable chaos.

One of the greatest delusions of our time is the belief that we can know the future.



## A P P E N D I X      B

### WALLEN READINGS





T H E   I N T E R P E R S O N A L   G A P

by

John L. Wallen

One of a series of readings in interpersonal  
relations prepared for

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1967



### THE INTERPERSONAL GAP

You cannot have your own way all the time. Your best intentions will sometimes end in disaster, while, at other times, you will receive credit for desirable outcomes you didn't intend. In short, what you accomplish is not always what you hoped.

The most basic and recurring problem in social life is the relation between what you intend and the effect of your actions on others. The key terms we use in attempting to make sense of interpersonal relations are "intentions" "actions" and "effect". "Interpersonal gap" refers to the degree of congruence between one person's intentions and the effect produced in the other. If the effect is what was intended, the gap has been bridged. If the effect is the opposite of what was intended, the gap has become greater.

Let us look more closely at the three terms.

By "intentions" I mean the wishes, wants, hopes, desires, fears that give rise to your actions. I am not referring to underlying motives of which you are unaware.

It is a fact that people can tell you after an action has produced some result, "That wasn't what I meant to do. That outcome wasn't what I intended." Or, "Yes, that's what I hoped would happen." We look at the social outcome and decide whether it is what we intended. Apparently, we can compare what we wished prior to acting with the outcome after we have acted and determine whether they match.

Here are some examples of interpersonal intentions.

- "I want him to like me."
- "I want him to obey me."
- "I want him to realize that I know a great deal about this subject."
- "I don't want her to know that I am angry with her."
- "I don't want to talk with him."
- "I wish he would tell me what to do."

Intentions may also be mixed.

- "I want him to know I like him, but I don't want to be embarrassed."
- "I want him to tell me I'm doing a good job, but I don't want to ask for it."
- "I would like him to know how angry it makes me when he does that, but I don't want to lose his friendship."

Intentions are private and are known directly only to the one who experiences them. I know my own intentions, but I must infer yours. You know your own intentions, but you must infer mine.



"Effect" refers to a person's inner response to the actions of another. We may describe the other's effect by openly stating what feelings are aroused by his actions. However, we are often unaware of our feelings as feelings. When this happens our feelings influence how we see the other and we label him or his actions in a way that expresses our feelings even though we are unaware of them.

<u>A's Actions</u>	<u>Effect in B</u>	<u>How B may talk about the effect of A's Actions</u>
A lectures to B... Interrupts B... does not respond to B's comments	B feels hurt, put down, angry	<u>Describing his feelings:</u> "When A acts like that I feel inferior and I resent feeling this way."  <u>Expressing his feelings by Labeling A:</u> "A is smug and arrogant."

Here are some other examples showing how the same effect may be talked about as a description of one's own feeling or by labeling the other as an indirect way of expressing one's feeling.

E-	→ <u>Describing Feelings:</u>	"What he did makes me feel angry with him."
	→ <u>Expressing feelings by labeling other:</u>	"He's self-centered. He wanted to hurt me."
E-	→ <u>Describing feelings:</u>	"What he just did makes me feel closer and more friendly towards him."
	→ <u>Expressing feelings by labeling other:</u>	"He's certainly a warm, understanding person."
E-	→ <u>Describing feelings:</u>	"When he acts like that I feel embarrassed and ill-at-ease."
	→ <u>Expressing feelings by labeling other:</u>	"He's crude and disgusting."

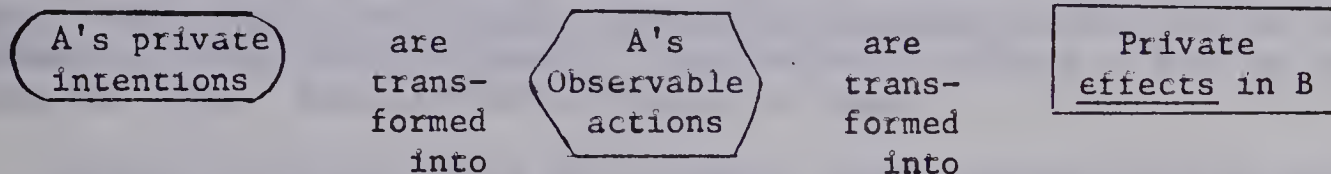
In contrast to interpersonal intentions and effects which are private, actions are public and observable. They may be verbal ("good morning!") or non-verbal (looking away when passing another), brief (a touch on the shoulder) or extended (taking a person out to dinner).





Interpersonal actions are communicative. They include attempts by the sender to convey a message, whether or not it is received, as well as actions that the receiver responds to as messages, whether or not the sender intended them that way.

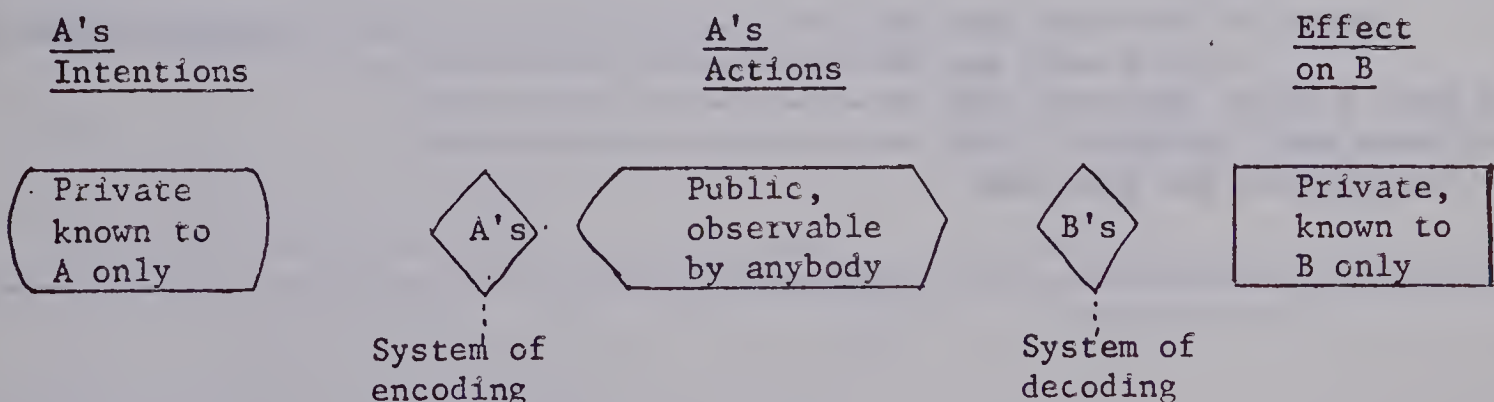
Here is a schematic summary of the interpersonal gap.



The interpersonal gap, thus, contains two transformations. I shall refer to these steps as coding and decoding operations. A's actions are a coded expression of his inner state. B's inner response is a result of the way he decodes A's actions. If B decodes A's behavior in the same way that A has coded it, A will have produced the effect he intended.

To be specific, let's image that I feel warm and friendly toward you. I pat you on the shoulder. The pat, thus, is an action code for my friendly feeling. You decode this, however, as an act of condescension. The effect of my behavior, then, is that you feel put down, inferior, and annoyed with me. My system of coding does not match your system of decoding and the interpersonal gap, consequently, is difficult to bridge.

We can now draw a more complete picture of the interpersonal gap as follows.



Must be  
inferred  
by B

Must be  
inferred  
by A.

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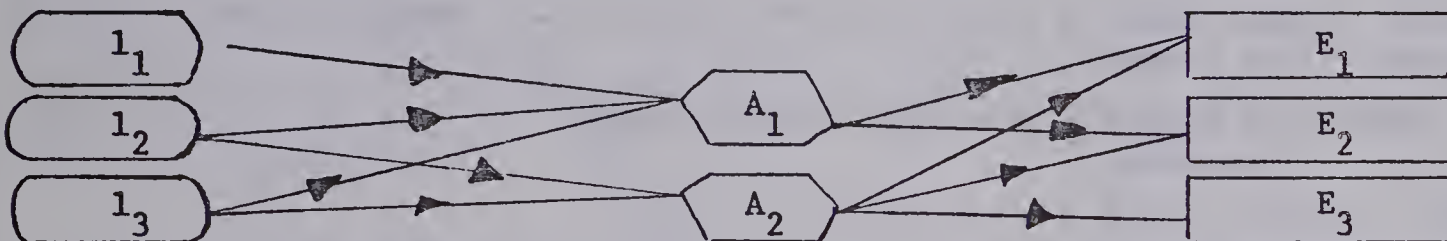


You may be unaware of the ways you code your intentions and decode others' actions. In fact, you may have been unaware that you do. One of the important objectives of this study of interpersonal relations is to help you become aware of the silent assumptions that influence how you code and decode.

If you are aware of your encoding operation, you can accurately describe how you typically act when you feel angry, affectionate, threatened, uneasy, etc.

If you are aware of your method of decoding behavior of others, you can accurately describe the kinds of distortions or misreadings of others you typically make. Some people, for example, respond to gestures of affection as if they were attempts to limit their autonomy. Some respond to offers of help as if they were being put down. Some misread enthusiasm as anger.

Because different people use different codes, actions have no unique and constant meaning, but are substitutable. As the diagram below shows, an action may express different intentions, the same intention may give rise to different actions, different actions may produce the same effect, and different effects may be produced by the same kind of action.



The same intention may be expressed by different actions.

Intention

Actions

To show affection	<p>-----&gt; take them out to dinner</p> <p>-----&gt; buy them a gift</p> <p>-----&gt; show interest in what they say</p> <p>-----&gt; don't interrupt them when they are busy and preoccupied.</p>
-------------------	---





Different intentions may be expressed by the same action.

Intentions

Action

To put them in your social debt-----	▶	take them out to dinner
To sweeten up a business deal-----	▶	
To repay a social obligation -----	▶	
To get closer to the other -----	▶	
To impress the other -----	▶	

The same action may lead to different effects.

Action

Effects

A takes B out to dinner	▶	B feels uneasy, thinks, "I wonder what A really wants of me?"
	▶	B enjoys it, thinks, "A really likes me."
	▶	B feels scornful, thinks, "A is trying to impress me."
	▶	B feels uncomfortable, ashamed; thinks, "I never did anything like this for A."

Different actions may lead to the same effect.

Actions

Effect

A tells B he showed B's report to top administration-----	▶	B feels proud, happy - thinks, "A recognizes my competence and ability."
A tells B he has been doing an excellent job -----	▶	
A asks B for advice -----	▶	
A gives B a raise -----	▶	





It should be obvious that when you and I interact, each of us views his own and the other's actions in a different frame of reference. Each of us sees his own actions in the light of his own intentions, but we see the other's actions in the light of the effect they have on us. This is the principle of partial information - each party to an interaction has different and partial information about the interpersonal gap.

Bridging the interpersonal gap requires that each person understand how the other sees the interaction.

\* \* \* \* \*

Jane hadn't seen Tom Laird since they taught together at Brookwood School. When she found that she would be attending a conference in Tom's city she wrote to ask if she could visit them. Tom and his wife, Marge, whom Jane had never met, invited her to stay with them for the three days of the conference.

After dinner the first night Jane was the one who suggested that they clean up the dishes so they could settle down for an evening of talk. She was feeling warm and friendly to both of the Lairds and so grateful for their hospitality that she wanted to show them in some way. As she began carrying the dishes to the kitchen, Marge and Tom at first protested but when she continued cleaning up they began to help. In the kitchen, Jane took over only allowing Marge and Tom to help in little ways and to tell her where to find or store things.

When they had finished in the kitchen, Jane commented, "There now, that didn't take long and everything's spic and span." Marge responded, "It was very helpful of you. Thank you."

When Tom and Marge were preparing for bed later that evening, Tom was startled to hear Marge burst out with, "I was so humiliated. I just resent her so much I can hardly stand it."

"You mean Jane" What did she do that upset you so?"

"The way she took over. She's certainly a pushy, dominating person. To come into my home as a visitor and then the moment dinner is over organize the whole clean-up. It's easy to tell that she thinks I'm not a very good housekeeper. At first I felt inadequate and then I felt angry. I'll keep house any way I like. Who is she to show me up? After all she's a guest and you'd think she'd be grateful for our putting her up."

"Aw, c'mon, Marge, Jane was just trying to be helpful."

"Well, it wasn't helpful. It was humiliating. It's going to be hard for me to be nice to her for three days."

\* \* \* \* \*



Let's diagram the interpersonal gap for the interaction between Jane and Marge.

---

JANE		MARGE
	<u>Interaction</u>	
Jane's <u>intention</u> : "I want them to know I like them and am gratefult o them."	Jane initiates and organizes kitchen clean-up	<u>Effect</u> on Marge: "I feel inadequate. I resent her."
		Marge's <u>inference</u> about Jane and Jane's <u>intentions</u> . "She's pushy. She looks down on my house- keeping."
Jane's <u>inference</u> about the <u>effect</u> on Marge: "She knows I am grateful. She appreciate my gesture."	Marge said, "Thank you. It was help- ful of you."	Marge's <u>intention</u> : "I don't want her to know I feel inad- equat and that I resent her."

---

Note the gap between Jane's intention and Marge's inference about Jane's intention. They do not match. In fact, they are almost opposites.

Note the gap between the effect of Jane's action on Marge and Jane's inference about the effect on Marge. Again they are almost opposite.

However, within each person the situation is balanced. Jane's intention is congruent with the effect she believes occurred in Marge. Likewise, the inferences Marge makes about Jane fit with her feelings as a result of Jane's action.

The action code that Jane used to convey her friendly feelings was decoded quite differently by Marge.

Why did Marge tell Jane she had been helpful if she really resented it?

John L. Wallen





Paraphrase

A Basic Communication Skill  
for Improving Interpersonal Relationships

The problem: Tell somebody your phone number and he will usually repeat it to make sure he heard it correctly. However, if you make a complicated statement most people will express agreement or disagreement without trying to insure that they are responding to what you intended. Most people seem to assume that what they understand from a statement is what the other intended.

How do you check to make sure that you understand another person's ideas, information, or suggestions as he intended them? How do you know that his remark means the same to you as it does to him?

Of course, you can get the other person to clarify his remark by asking, "What do you mean?" or "Tell me more." or by saying "I don't understand." However, after he has elaborated you still face the same question. "Am I understanding his idea as he intended it to be understood?" Your feeling of certainty is no evidence that you do in fact understand. (See "On Misunderstanding".)

The skill: If you state in your own way what his remark conveys to you, the other can begin to determine whether his message is coming through as he intended. Then, if he thinks you misunderstand, he can speak directly to the specific misunderstanding you have revealed. I will use the term "paraphrase" for any means of showing the other person what his idea or suggestion means to you.

Paraphrasing, then, is any way of revealing your understanding of the other person's comment in order to test your understanding.

An additional benefit of paraphrasing is that it lets the other know that you are interested in him. It is evident that you do want to understand what he means.

If you can satisfy the other that you really do understand his point, he will probably be more willing to attempt to understand your views.

Paraphrasing, thus, is crucial in attempting to bridge the interpersonal gap. (1) It increases the accuracy of communication, and thus the degree of mutual or shared understanding. (2) The act of paraphrasing itself conveys feeling - your interest in the other, your concern to see how he views things.

Learning to paraphrase: People sometimes think of paraphrasing as merely putting the other person's ideas in another way. They try to say the same thing with different words. Such word-swapping may merely result in the illusion of mutual understanding as in the following example.

Sarah: Jim should never have become a teacher.

Fred: You mean teaching isn't the right job for him?

Sarah: Exactly! Teaching is not the right job for Jim.

Instead of trying to reword Sarah's statement Fred might have asked himself, "What does Sarah's statement mean to me?" In that case the interchange might have sounded like this.





Sarah: Jim should never have become a teacher.  
Fred: You mean he is too harsh on the children? Maybe even cruel?  
Sarah: Oh, no. I meant that he has such expensive tastes that he can't ever earn enough as a teacher.  
Fred: Oh, I see. You think he should have gone into a field that would have insured him a higher standard of living.  
Sarah: Exactly! Teaching is not the right job for Jim.

Effective paraphrasing is not a trick or a verbal gimmick. It comes from an attitude, a desire to know what the other means. And to satisfy this desire you reveal the meaning his comment had for you so that the other can check whether it matches the meaning he intended to convey.

If the other's statement was general, it may convey something specific to you.

Larry: I think this is a very poor textbook.  
You: Poor? You mean it has too many inaccuracies?  
Larry: No, the text is accurate, but the book comes apart too easily.

Possibly the other's comments suggests an example to you.

Laura: This text has too many omissions; we shouldn't adopt it.  
You: Do you mean, for example, that it contains nothing about the Negro's role in the development of America?  
Laura: Yes, that's one example. It also lacks any discussion of the development of the arts in America.

If the speaker's comment was very specific, it may convey a more general idea to you.

Ralph: Do you have 25 pencils I can borrow for my class?  
You: Do you just want something for them to write with? I have about 15 ball-point pens and 10 or 11 pencils.  
Ralph: Great. Anything that will write will do.

Sometimes the other's idea will suggest its inverse or opposite to you.

Stanley: I think the Teacher's Union acts so irresponsibly because the Administration has ignored them so long.  
You: Do you mean that the T.U. would be less militant now if the Administration had consulted with them in the past?  
Stanley: Certainly, I think the T.U. is being forced to more and more desperate measures.

To develop your skill in understanding others, try different ways of (1) conveying your interest in understanding what they mean, (2) revealing what the other's statements mean to you. Find out what kinds of responses are helpful ways of paraphrasing for you.

The next time someone is angry with you or is criticizing you, try to paraphrase until you can demonstrate that you understand what he is trying to convey as he intends it. What effect does this have on your feelings and on his?



## Behavior Description

### A Basic Communication Skill for Improving Interpersonal Relationships

The problem: If you and another person are to discuss the way you work together or what is happening in your relationship, both of you must be able to talk about what each of you does that affects the other. This is not easy. Most of us have trouble describing another's behavior clearly enough that he can understand what actions of his we have in mind.

Instead of describing the other person's behavior we usually discuss his attitudes, his motivations, his traits and personality characteristics. Often our statements are more expressive of the way we feel about the other's actions than they are informing about his behavior. And yet we may be unaware of our feelings at the time.

Let's suppose you tell me that I am rude (a trait) or that I don't care about your opinion (my motivation). Because I am not trying to be rude and because I feel that I do care about your opinion, I don't understand what you are trying to communicate. We certainly have not moved closer to a shared understanding. However, if you point out that several times in the past few minutes I have interrupted you and have overridden you before you could finish what you were saying, I receive a clearer picture of what actions of mine were affecting you.

The skill: Behavior description means reporting specific, observable actions of others (1) without placing a value on them as right or wrong, bad or good, (2) without making accusations or generalizations about the other's motives, attitudes, or personality traits.

You try to let others know what behavior you are responding to by describing it clearly enough and specifically enough that others know what you observed. To do this you must describe visible evidence -- actions that are open to anybody's observation. Sometimes, for practice, it is helpful to try beginning your description with "I see that..." or "I noticed that..." or "I heard you say..." to remind yourself that you are trying to describe specific actions.

Examples: "Jim, you've talked more than others on this topic. Several times you cut others off before they had finished."

NOT: "Jim, you're too rude!" which names a trait and gives no evidence.

NOT: "Jim, you always want to hog the center of attention!" which imputes an undersirable motive or intention.

"Bob, you've taken the opposite of nearly everything Harry has suggested today."

NOT: "Bob, you're just trying to show Harry up." which is an accusation of undersirable motivation.

NOT: "Bob, you're being stubborn." which is name calling.





"Sam, you cut in before I had finished."

NOT: "Sam, you deliberately didn't let me finish." The word "deliberately" implies that Sam knowingly and intentionally cut you off. All that anybody can observe is that he did cut in before you had finished.

Several members of the group had told Ben that he was too arrogant. Ben was confused and puzzled by this judgment. He was confused because he didn't know what to do about it: he didn't know what it referred to. He was puzzled because he didn't feel arrogant or scornful of the others. In fact, he admitted that he really felt nervous and unsure of himself. Finally, Joe commented that Ben often laughed explosively after Ben made a comment that seemed to have no humorous aspects. Ben said he had been unaware of this. Others immediately recognized that this was the behavior that made them perceive Ben as looking down on them and, therefore, arrogant. The pattern, thus, was as follows. When he made a statement of which he was somewhat unsure, Ben felt insecure ---- Ben's feelings of insecurity expressed themselves in an explosive laugh after Ben made the statement ---- the other person perceived Ben as laughing at him ---- the other person felt put down and humiliated ---- the other expressed his feeling of humiliation by calling Ben arrogant. Note that Ben had no awareness of his own behavior which was being misread until Joe accurately described what Ben was doing. Ben could then see that his laugh was a way of attempting to cope with his own feelings of insecurity.

To develop skill in describing behavior you must sharpen your observation of what actually did occur. You must force yourself to pay attention to what is observable and to hold inferences in abeyance. As you practice this you may find that many of your conclusions about others are based less on observable evidence than on your own feelings of affection, insecurity, irritation, jealousy, or fear. For example, accusations that attribute undesirable motives to another are usually expressions of the speaker's negative feelings toward the other and not descriptions at all.





### Description of Feelings

#### A Basic Communication Skill for Improving Interpersonal Relationships

The problem: To communicate your own feelings accurately or to understand those of others is difficult.

First, expressions of emotion take many different forms. Feelings can express themselves in bodily changes, in action, and in words. (See attached diagram.)

Second, any specific expression of feeling may come from very different feelings. A blush, for example, may indicate that the person is feeling pleased, but it may also indicate that he feels annoyed, or embarrassed, or uneasy.

Likewise, a specific feeling does not always get expressed in the same way. For example, a child's feeling of affection for his teacher may lead him to blush when she stands near his desk, to touch her as he passes her, to watch her as she walks around the room, to tell her "You're nice," to bring his pet turtle to show her, etc., --different forms of expression for the child's feeling of affection.

Communication of feelings, thus, is often inaccurate or even misleading. What looks like an expression of anger, for example, often turns out to result from hurt feelings or from fear.

A further obstacle to the accurate communication of feelings is that your perception of what another is feeling is based on so many different kinds of information. When somebody speaks, you notice more than just the words he says. You note his gestures, voice tone, posture, facial expression, etc. In addition, you are aware of the immediate present situation -- the context in which the interaction is occurring. You are aware of whether somebody is watching, for example. And so you make assumptions about how the situation influences what the other is feeling. Beyond all of this you also have expectations based on your past experiences with the other.

You make inferences from all of this information -- his words, nonverbal cues, the situational context, your expectations of the other. These inferences are influenced by your own current emotional state. What you perceive the other to be feeling, then, often depends more upon what you are feeling (e.g., to be afraid of or wishing for) than upon the other person's actions or words. For example, if you are feeling guilty about something, you may perceive others as angry with you. If you are feeling depressed and discouraged about yourself, others may seem to be expressing disapproval of you.

And so -- communicating your own and understanding the feelings of others is an extremely difficult task. And yet, if you wish others to respond to you as a person, you must help them understand how you feel. Likewise, if you are concerned about the other as a person and about your relationship with him, you must try to understand his emotional reactions.



The skill: Although we usually try to describe our ideas clearly and accurately, we often do not try to describe our feelings clearly. Feelings get expressed in many different ways, but we do not usually attempt to identify the feeling itself.

One way to describe a feeling is to identify or name it. "I feel angry." "I feel embarrassed." "I feel comfortable with you." However, we do not have enough names or labels to encompass the broad range of human emotions, and so we invent other ways to describe our feelings, such as the use of similes. "I feel like a tiny frog in a huge pond." A girl, whose friendly overture had just been rebuffed, said, "I feel like I have just had an arm amputated."

A third way to describe a feeling is to report what kind of action the feeling urges you to do. "I feel like hugging and hugging you." "I'd like to slap you." "I wish I could walk off and leave you."

In addition, many figures of speech serve as descriptions of feeling. "I just swallowed a bushel of spring sunshine."

Describing your own feelings: You try to make clear what feelings you are experiencing by identifying them. The statement must (1) refer to "I", "me", or "my", and (2) specify some kind of feeling by name, simile, action urge, or other figure of speech.

The following examples show the relation between two kinds of expressions of feeling, (1) those that describe what the speaker is feeling, and (2) those that do not. Notice that expressions of feeling which describe the speaker's emotional state are more precise, less capable of misinterpretation, and, thus, convey more accurately what feelings are affecting the speaker.

Expressing feeling by describing  
your emotional state

"I feel embarrassed."

"I feel pleased."

"I feel annoyed."

"I feel angry!"

"I'm worried about this."

"I feel hurt by what you said."

"I enjoy her sense of humor."

"I respect her abilities and competence."

"I love her but I feel I shouldn't say so."

"I hurt too much to hear any more."

"I feel angry with myself."

"I'm angry with you."

Expressing feeling without describing  
your emotional state

Blushing and saying nothing.

Suddenly becoming silent in the  
midst of a conversation.

"She's a wonderful person."

"Shut up!!!"

As the emotional states express themselves simultaneously in words, in actions, and in physiological changes, a person may convey contradictory messages about what he is feeling. For example, his actions (a smile or laugh) may contradict his words (that he is angry). The clearest emotional communication occurs when the speaker's description of what he is feeling matches and, thus, amplifies what is being conveyed by his actions and other nonverbal expressions of feeling.





The aim in describing your own feelings is to start a dialogue that will improve your relationship with the other. After all, others need to know how you feel if they are to take your feelings into account. Negative feelings are indicator signals that something may be going wrong in a relationship with another person. To ignore negative feelings is like ignoring a warning light that indicates that an electrical circuit is overloaded. Negative feelings are a signal that the two of you need to check for misunderstanding and faulty communication.

After discussing how each of you sees the situation or your relationship, you may discover that your feelings resulted from false perceptions of the situation and of his motives. In this case, your feelings would probably change. However, the other may discover that his actions are arousing feelings in you that he wasn't aware of -- feelings that others beside you might experience in response to his behavior - and he may change.

In short, describing your feelings should not be an effort to coerce the other into changing so that you won't feel as you do. Rather you report your inner state as just one more piece of information that is necessary if the two of you are to understand and improve your relationship.

Perception check: You describe what you perceive to be the other's inner state in order to check whether you do understand what he feels. That is, you test to see whether you have decoded his expressions of feeling accurately. You transform his expressions of feeling into a tentative description of his feeling. A good perception check conveys this message, "I want to understand your feelings -- is this (making a description of his feelings) the way you feel?"

Examples:

"I get the impression you are angry with me. Are you?"  
(NOT: "Why are you so angry with me?" This is mind reading, not perception checking.)

"Am I right that you feel disappointed that nobody commented on your suggestion?"

"I'm not sure whether your expression means that my comment hurt your feelings, irritated you, or confused you."

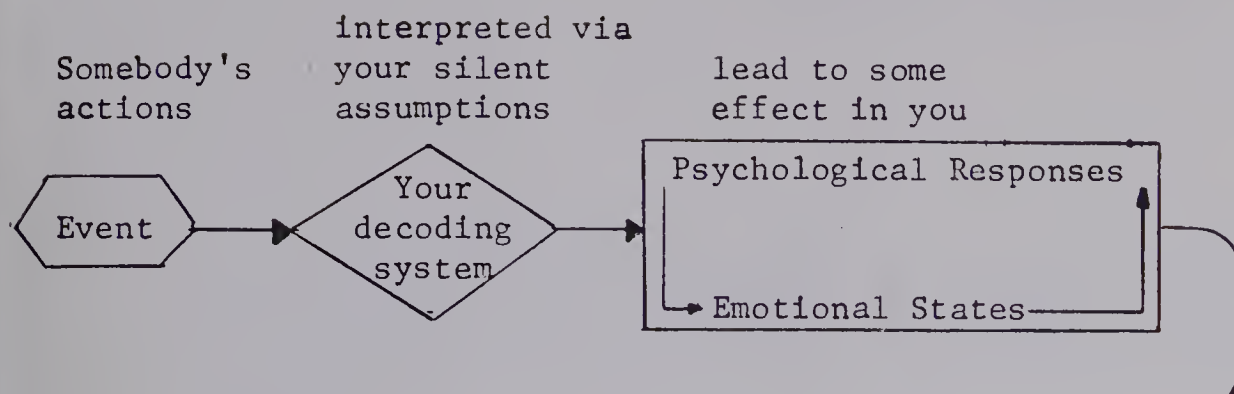
Note that a perception check (1) describes the other's feelings, and (2) does not express disapproval or approval. It merely conveys, "This is how I understand your feelings. Am I accurate?"

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July 1968





# HOW YOUR EMOTIONAL STATES EXPRESS THEMSELVES



Even when you are unaware of your feelings, your emotional state may express itself in these ways

Physiological Expression: heart rate, breathing, blushing, sweating, weeping, trembling, ...

Expressions in Actions: hugging, smiling, hitting, looking at or away, slouching, biting lips, ...

Expression in Words:

COMMANDS: "Shut up!"

QUESTIONS: "Is it safe to drive this fast?"

ACCUSATIONS: "You don't care about me."

NAME-CALLING: "You're rude."

SARCASM: "You certainly make a person feel appreciated!"

JUDGEMENTS:

Approval: "You're wonderful!"

Disapproval: "You talk too much."

## DESCRIPTIONS OF FEELING:

"I hurt too much to hear any more."

"I'm afraid going this fast."

"It hurt my feeling when you forgot my birthday."

"I felt put down when you ignored my comment."

"I resent it when you don't seem to appreciate what I did for you."

"I really enjoy your sense of humor."

"I'm getting bored and beginning to tune out."

You can describe your feelings only when you are aware of what they are.



## A P P E N D I X      C

### CORRESPONDENCE



6504 - 84 Street,  
Edmonton, Alberta.

Dear

Six months have passed since your involvement with Educational Psychology 517, Human Relations Seminar. As part of my Masters Thesis I am doing follow-up research on the project Dr. Paul Kosiey started last summer.

In order to more fully understand the effects of group participation it would be greatly appreciated if you would be willing to cooperate in a follow-up study. This research will be dealing more with the findings of the total group rather than individual scores.

Enclosed is a form to complete and a self-addressed stamped envelope in which to return the form at your earliest convenience. Since there is such a small sample it is essential that all forms be completed.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you are interested, the results of the study will be made available.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Field,  
Graduate Student  
Dept. of Ed. Psych.

JF:vjf  
Enclosure











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